



*City of Benbrook
Annual Report*

2015

BUILDING FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE



A MESSAGE FROM CITY COUNCIL

Our overriding goal is to provide the best quality of life possible at the lowest possible cost to the taxpayers.

On behalf of the Benbrook City Council, thank you for choosing Benbrook to *live, work, and play*. This annual report marks the ninth consecutive year Benbrook has provided a written update on the state of our City. We invite you to browse these pages as we look back on 2015 and the progress we are making to build a brighter future.

—Mayor Jerry B. Dittrich



2015

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INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

For many citizens, 2015 will be remembered as a benchmark year for construction in Benbrook. The widening of Benbrook Boulevard/U.S. 377 by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) created challenges for motorists and businesses alike. We thank you for your patience as Benbrook works with TxDOT to manage this complex but essential project. Ultimately, we hope our citizens are excited about the aesthetic and functional improvements to our primary business corridor. We encourage you to continue to support our local businesses during construction.

Also in 2015, TxDOT completed the reconstruction of RM 2871. At the City's urging, TxDOT installed a traffic signal at RM 2871 and Jerry Dunn Parkway. As a component of the project, Benbrook funded a sidewalk to connect the pedestrian crossing at the improved intersection to the Westpark Subdivision.

Benbrook also rebuilt Timberline Drive, which in recent years had experienced significant road base failures. The project was engineered and managed in-house and used the assistance of Tarrant County and the Benbrook Water Authority in the construction. The project restabilized the road, replaced curb and gutter, and provided a fresh layer of asphalt.

The Benbrook Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) completed the extension of Winbrook Drive and Benbrook Parkway. The extended roadways, with related water and sewer service, facilitate future development for the northeast corner of Winscott Road and I-20, and create better street connectivity into and within the Benbrook Industrial Park.

Additionally, the last unpaved alley in Benbrook, between Usher Street and Benbrook Boulevard, was reconstructed with concrete. Also, a drainage project was completed on Plantation East Creek at Springbranch Drive to protect the abutments of a bridge.

In 2015, the Dutch Branch Park metal light pole project was completed, replacing all remaining wood light poles. The project was accomplished in-house with City crews. The existing light fixtures were used on the new metal poles. The walking track and hike/bike path in Dutch Branch Park were resurfaced and restriped, and the benches were added at strategic locations within the park.

Finally, Benbrook set aside \$500,000 for the future construction of a new animal shelter, and approved funding for a conceptual design and related construction cost estimate.

All of Benbrook's capital projects highlighted in this annual report were constructed with cash reserves, rather than issuing debt. Our organizational commitment to operate in a lean, responsive, and financially sustainable way offers us flexibility in making sound funding decisions. As a result, Benbrook enjoys a 'AA+' credit rating. According to Standard and Poor's financial services, *"Benbrook offers a consistently strong financial profile indicated by its very strong budgetary flexibility and liquidity, supported by strong management practices."*

COMMUNITY GROWTH

The year 2015 marked an upturn in the housing market with construction of new residential homes, and an increase in new commercial buildings, with a combined value of over \$33 million. In response to the increased demand for housing, new home construction is taking place in five residential subdivisions, including: Whitestone Ranch Phase IV (89 lots), La Cantera Phase II (38 lots), La Cantera Phase III (60 lots), Palomino Phase II (36 lots) and Brookside at Benbrook Field Phase II (84 lots), adding a total of 307 new residential lots.

In 2015, the Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD) began construction of the new Westpark Elementary School on Jerry Dunn Parkway. The new elementary school supports the continued transition to Benbrook Middle/High School, which welcomed its first sophomore class in school year 2015/2016. The 80,281 square foot elementary school is slated to open for the 2016/2017 school year.

The Benbrook Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) sold the corner lot located at Benbrook Boulevard/U.S. 377 and I-20 near Starbucks. A small shopping center is planned for the site and tenants are currently being recruited. In addition, the BEDC is making infrastructure improvements on commercial property at the NW Winscott Addition, in preparation for future development.

Benbrook City Council understands that each citizen has a tangible investment in our community through the payment of taxes, volunteerism, and other community-minded endeavors. As such, providing an outstanding return on your investment is our priority. Our overriding goal is to provide the very best quality of life possible at the lowest possible cost to the taxpayers.

Thank you for allowing us to serve,
Benbrook City Council

The men and women of the Benbrook Police and Fire Departments work daily to serve and protect the citizens of Benbrook. Their dedication, specialized training, response times, and professional demeanor result in exceptional public safety for our community.

PUBLIC SAFETY

BENBROOK POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Benbrook police department is a nationally recognized award-winning law enforcement agency, providing community outreach, community volunteer programs, crime prevention and education, criminal investigation and patrol services, and animal control services.

Benbrook continues to maintain one of the lowest crime rates in Tarrant County. During 2015, there was a slight increase in crime within the City. There were a total of 498 Part 1 crimes, increased from 424 reported in 2014. The majority of Part 1 crimes in Benbrook represent theft and burglaries.

For 2015, the Patrol and Criminal Investigation Sections logged 275,434 miles and responded to 14,927 calls for police service. The average response time was 2.53 minutes; the same as in 2014.

Vehicle accident investigations totaled 353, up from 321 accidents investigated in 2014. Accidents included 238 minor accidents (with no injuries) and 115 major accidents resulting in injuries. A total of 159 persons were injured, down from 163 persons injured in the previous year. There were no fatality accidents in 2015.

A total of 1,102 arrests were made, an increase of 13 from the 1,089 arrests in 2014. Arrests included 1,007 adults and 95 juveniles.

The Communications Section (Police and Fire 911 operations) dispatched 20,041 calls for service during the year, including 14,927 Patrol and Criminal Investigation Section calls, 663 fire calls, 2,247 ambulance calls, 185 dual fire/EMS calls and 2,019 animal control calls.

Police Department personnel attended a total of 3,971 hours of specialized and advanced training, doubling education and training efforts from 2014. Police Officer recruitment remains a high priority. Nationally recognized for exceptional law enforcement, the department seeks top-notch police officers who exhibit qualities that mirror those of the department. These efforts will continue through 2016.

Benbrook Citizens on Patrol (COP) recorded a total of 3,032 hours of service, logged 21,623 miles, and filed 506 reports. COP is comprised of citizen volunteers who assist the Police Department by patrolling targeted areas of the city and performing community services.

Benbrook Police Department

1080 Mercedes Street

Non-Emergency Phone
Number: 817-249-2752

Dispatch: 817-249-1610

2015 Average Response Time:
2.53 minutes



The Police and Fire departments are recognized with the National Voice of People Award for Exceptional Service.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Benbrook Fire department is charged with preserving and protecting lives and property from fire and other disasters. The Fire department fights fires, performs rescue operations, controls hazardous spills and leaks, promotes fire prevention through education, conducts annual fire inspections of Benbrook businesses, and enforces fire codes.

In addition, the department manages Emergency Medical Services (EMS/ambulance service), providing emergency medical treatment and transportation of sick and injured persons. Personnel also teach First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) classes to the community, as well as conduct special courses to train residents in life-saving techniques.

The City of Benbrook Fire and EMS Department serves the community with 24-full time, 9 Auxiliary City Fire Support Unit (ACFSU) members, and three volunteers. Fire Department personnel inspected a total of 456

businesses, spent approximately 318 hours on fire prevention education, and spent 1,599 combined hours in training.

During the year, the Fire Department hired three EMT Firefighters, and purchased a new ambulance, 12 sets of firefighting bunker gear, and two new EMS patient stretchers.

The Fire Division reported a total fire loss of \$636,110 for 2015, down significantly from the fire loss of \$1,435,800 in 2014. The EMS division transported 1,725 patients to area hospitals.

The Department moved the existing outdoor warning siren from Rolling Hills Drive to a new location at Rolling Hills Park to improve the power supply and reliability of the siren. They also obtained a new 3000 gallon Tanker from Tarrant County Emergency Services District, to include a new set of rescue tools.

Benbrook Fire Department

528 Mercedes Street

Non-Emergency Phone
Number: 817-249-1727

Average response time is 6.0 minutes in the city (increased by .1 seconds) and 9.0 minutes to the county (improved by 1.4 minutes)



BENBROOK BOULEVARD/U.S. 377

In September 2014, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), in partnership with the City of Benbrook, began the \$22 million reconstruction of Benbrook Boulevard/U.S. 377. The 1.3-mile project, from I-20/Loop 820 south to Winscott Road/Lakeway Drive, will reduce congestion, improve mobility, and increase safety. The completed project will also enhance the overall aesthetic appeal of Benbrook's busiest commercial corridor, attracting new development and investment.

The project will widen Benbrook Boulevard/U.S. 377 from a four-lane rural-type section (shoulders and bar ditches) to a six-lane urban roadway with curbs and raised medians and left turn bays to allow safer access to businesses. The project consists of three phases, each with three stages.

Benbrook businesses and motorists along the boulevard have endured the challenges of occasional daytime lane closures and traffic switches, but their patience is paying off as we near completion of Phase 1 of the project, from Mercedes Street to Sproles Drive. There was a slight delay in progress because of inclement weather in the spring months, but the project contractor, Texas Sterling Construction Company, moved relatively quickly and the project appears to be back on track, with completion of all phases anticipated in 2017.

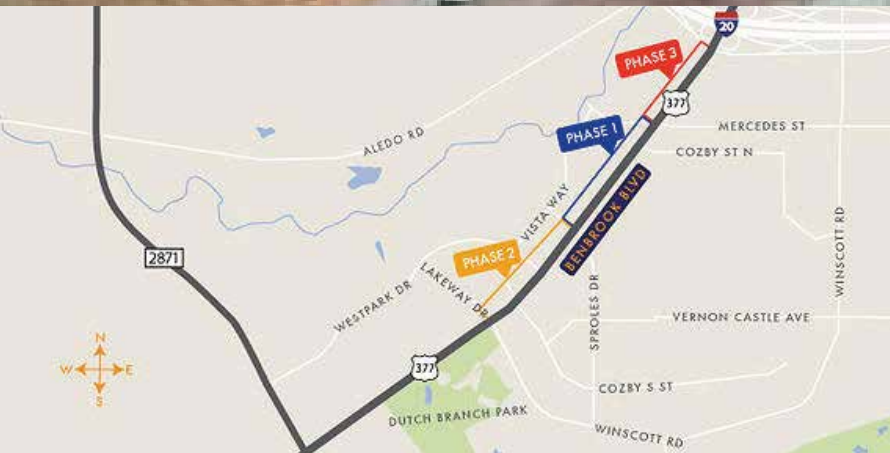
In late 2015, project managers announced that construction of Phase 2, from Sproles Drive to Winscott Road/Lakeway Drive, and Phase 3, from I-20 to Mercedes Street will be built concurrently to accelerate completion. Upon completion, the City of Benbrook plans to beautify the newly-constructed roadway with additional landscaping, and may assist in utility relocation, as needed.

The City of Benbrook, the Benbrook Economic Development Corporation (BEDC), and TxDOT are committed to minimizing the inconvenience of the expansion project for motorists and businesses along the corridor by communicating plans, supporting the business community, and encouraging shoppers to continue to shop along Benbrook Boulevard/U.S. 377 during construction.

Traffic signs, detours, and lane switches are necessary for the project, but access to local businesses is still available. The City of Benbrook shares updates on the project on the City's website: **www.benbrook-tx.gov** or follow us on Facebook: **www.facebook.com/benbrooktexas**

Please adhere to all traffic signs, as your safety is our top priority.

The 1.3-mile project will reduce congestion, improve mobility, and increase safety.



The completed project will also enhance the overall aesthetic appeal of Benbrook's busiest commercial corridor, attracting new development and investment.

BUILDING A BETTER BENBROOK

A message from the Benbrook Economic Development Corporation

WHAT IS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?

Fostering a vibrant, thriving economy is crucial to the future of any community. Cities and local governments work to nurture small business, encourage entrepreneurship, advance commerce, and create jobs.

Fortunately, Texas law offers several tools for local leaders seeking to generate economic development and opportunity.

Community growth that includes new residential and commercial development, improved infrastructure, new jobs, educational opportunities, improved public amenities, tourism, and any number of activities that enhance quality-of-life, offer the economic vitality that can sustain a community for years to come.

Benbrook enjoyed stable growth in 2015 in the form of new construction, with new residences valued at nearly \$16,500,000 and new commercial buildings valued at over \$16,800,000. By late 2015, five new residential developments were completed, or under construction.

The Benbrook Boulevard/U.S. 377 expansion project continues in earnest. When the dust settles, our busiest commercial corridor will go from four to six lanes, reducing congestion and providing a safer, newer roadway. Construction is expected to be complete in 2017 (see 'Benbrook Boulevard/U.S. 377' on pages 5-6).

These "rooftops" and infrastructure improvements are important considerations for commercial developers looking to invest in our community. In fact, new rooftops, robust traffic counts, large retail trade areas, ease of permitting processes, and low cost of business are key factors in determining new development.

As your Economic Development Corporation, we continually strive to tell the story of growth and opportunity to potential investors, developers, and retailers. Our story is taking shape every day, and we are working to lay the foundation for future investment in our community.

WHAT DOES THE BENBROOK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION DO?

The job of the BEDC is to support our business community and facilitate growth by using a variety of tools at our disposal. Through the half-cent sales tax revenue, the BEDC is legally allowed to fund manufacturing and industrial development, and may pay for land, buildings, equipment, facilities, targeted infrastructure, and improvements to facilitate development to enhance quality-of-life within the community.

Residents often express an interest in specific types of commercial development. From citizen survey data, we know that our community desires a variety of retail development, often identifying a preference for a full-service restaurant/bar and a stand-alone grocery store. In response to this, the BEDC encouraged the development of a full-service restaurant at the property sale of 8501 Benbrook Boulevard in January 2015. As construction begins, the BEDC will continue to assist the developer in these recruitment efforts, as well as in attempting to broker restaurant deals at other potential locations. In late 2015, the BEDC contracted the services of grocery store experts to perform a trade area analysis of Benbrook, and to assist in our efforts to recruit a viable grocer to our community.

In calendar year 2015, 45 new businesses opened in Benbrook. We welcome them, and are pleased they've chosen to invest in our community. Unfortunately, several

“Our story is taking shape every day, and we are working to lay the foundation for future investment in our community.”



businesses also closed their doors. As we speak to citizens, we understand the disappointment experienced when a favorite business closes. Erroneously, some residents believe that the BEDC is responsible for businesses closing. It's important to remember; we operate under a predominately free market economy, and economic development corporations do not dictate how individuals or corporations conduct their business. Economic development corporations do not make business decisions for others. Businesses are free to move, rebuild, leave, or expand as they see fit, and in whatever ways are most beneficial to them. Often, decisions to close or move retail operations are made because the retail market is not providing enough support to sustain that business. Consumers dictate who comes and who goes within a community, through the use of their spending dollars. For this reason, the BEDC encourages shoppers to continue to support the businesses they want to see thrive in our community.

We recognize that citizens can grow frustrated with road construction and occasional vacant buildings; however, commercial endeavors are ever-changing, especially in a growing community such as Benbrook. The BEDC's mission is to ease the inconvenience of our growing pains by creating incentives, marketing our community, encouraging consumer loyalty, offering support, and maintaining a "business friendly" environment.

The BEDC is committed to operating with transparency. However, the very nature of economic development sometimes prevents the BEDC from publicly divulging what may be "in the works" to recruit businesses, which can result in the public feeling uninformed. Many businesses do not want to make public announcements about their plans until a deal is confirmed, and sometimes private agreements take many months to negotiate. We respect the process, and understand that our reputation with property owners and developers would be compromised, and development stalled, if we broke that trust.

So, we continue to seek innovative ways to support our business community and to inform our public. In 2015, the Benbrook Economic Development Corporation and Benbrook City Council approved a Storefront Improvement Program Grant in 2015 to assist local businesses with improvements to storefront facades. The 50% matching grant provides incentive to make aesthetic improvements, with a preference to businesses located along Benbrook Boulevard/U.S. 377.

The BEDC works to engage, retain, and support our businesses, provide relevant and accurate data to prospects, and position our community for quality development.

You can do your part by continuing to shop and support our local business community!

Thank you for helping to Build a Better Benbrook!

Consumers dictate who comes and who goes within a community, through the use of their spending dollars.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

For 2015, Benbrook maintained the property tax rate at 65.75 cents per \$100 valuation. Two and one-half cents are allocated towards the payment of debt for streets, parks, and drainage projects; the other 63.25 cents finances general operations.

The City ended the 2014-15 fiscal year in the black and added over \$1.7 million to Benbrook's reserves. General Fund unaudited expenditures for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015 totaled \$15,387,338 – including the use of \$300,000 in reserves to replace a fire engine. Police expenditures represented 36.64% of total expenses. Fire Department expenditures were 19.00%.

Total unaudited revenues for the 2014-15 fiscal year were \$17,097,485; General Fund revenue was 106.61% of the budget projection. Property taxes accounted for 59.98% of total revenue collected. Sales tax provided 13.35% of revenue collected.

The City retained a strong credit rating of Aa3 from Moody's and maintained a AA+ rating from Standard and Poor's. These ratings are indications of the private sector's view of Benbrook's solid financial condition and future prospects. The City's sound credit rating results from Benbrook's ample reserves, proven financial controls, and professional staff.

For the 31st consecutive year, the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recognized Benbrook with its Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the City's annual financial report. Benbrook again received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for excellence in municipal budgeting from GFOA.

In September 2015, City Council adopted the budget for the 2015-16 fiscal year based on a property tax rate of 65.75 cents. A summary of the revenues and expenditures are depicted on the following page.



STANDARD
& POOR'S

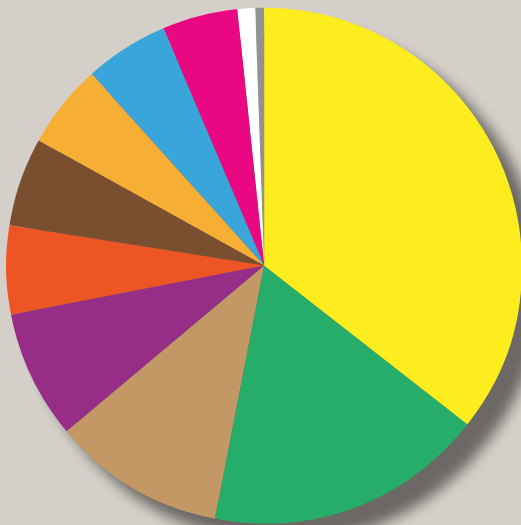
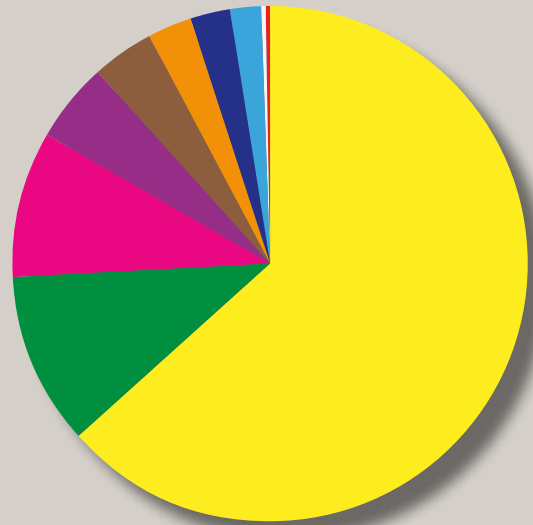
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OPERATING FUNDS

2015-2016 Budget

(October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016)

Revenues by Source	Budget 2015-16	% of Budget
Property Taxes	\$11,187,281	63.59%
Sales and Other Taxes	\$1,904,120	10.82%
Franchise Fees	\$1,603,000	9.11%
Service Charges	\$849,975	4.83%
Fines and Forfeitures	\$687,250	3.91%
Transfers	\$502,631	2.86%
Revenue from Other Agencies	\$426,500	2.43%
Licenses and Permits	\$351,225	2.00%
Use of Money and Property	\$60,250	0.34%
Other Revenue	\$20,000	0.11%
Total	\$17,592,232	100.00%



Expenditures	Budget 2015-16	% of Budget
Police	\$6,293,623	35.70%
Fire and Ambulance	\$3,068,094	17.40%
General Government	\$1,942,576	11.02%
Public Works	\$1,380,500	7.83%
Staff Services	\$1,018,750	5.78%
Public Services	\$971,304	5.51%
Debt Service	\$936,948	5.32%
Parks and Recreation	\$892,787	5.06%
Community Development	\$832,756	4.72%
Municipal Court	\$195,540	1.11%
Code Compliance	\$97,034	0.55%
Total	\$17,629,912	100.00%

Community spirit is strong in Benbrook; events, festivals, and special programs help bring us together.



Learning

CELEBRATION!

Volunteerism



SAFETY

Community Spirit



COMMUNITY SPIRIT

The City of Benbrook, along with community partners, hosted several annual events and programs in 2015.

Benbrook residents participated in The American Cancer Society **Relay for Life** event and the Benbrook Police Officers Association's annual **Easter Egg Hunt** in April.

In May, the Benbrook Police Department hosted the **Bicycle Safety Rodeo**. The annual event provides young boys and girls with free bicycle safety checks, helmet guidelines and safety instructions. Kids enjoyed unlimited laps around an obstacle course and one lucky participant won a free bicycle!

Benbrook City staff again welcomed **Vital Link** students to learn about City departments. Vital Link is a week long, half-day summer internship offered by the Fort Worth Independent School District. The program exposes students to daily business operations and "links" academics to job skills. Teachers are on-site with students to supervise and assist in incorporating school lessons into workplace application.

In September, a record-breaking 450 Benbrook adult and youth volunteers joined together to help clean litter and debris from Benbrook Lake and park areas at the 23rd annual **Trinity Trash Bash**. As a member of the Trinity River Environmental Educational Society (T.R.E.E.S.), Benbrook is part of a network of municipalities that participate in the Trinity Trash Bash event, which is an

annual volunteer cleanup of the Trinity River and its tributaries.

Residents and visitors celebrated the 9th annual **Heritage Fest "Cowboy Roundup"** in October. Heritage Fest brought several thousand visitors to Benbrook's Dutch Branch Park to celebrate our western heritage, enjoying music, performances, and arts and crafts. Also in October, the annual **National Night Out** event welcomed hundreds of guests joining together to take a bite out of crime by increasing awareness and community support for law enforcement.

The **Benbrook Community Garden** was in full bloom throughout the year. Special programs and community projects kept gardeners and volunteers busy. Church groups, scouts, and others enjoyed learning about plants and gardening techniques, and several young Benbrook citizens completed projects to enhance garden features.

In December, the annual **Christmas Tree Lighting** event was followed by the beginning of **Winter Wonderland**; the month-long light display capturing the spirit of the Christmas season.

Benbrook citizens volunteer in numerous ways to better our community. The success of any event is dependent on the commitment of volunteers. As we look back on 2015, we thank all the volunteers and participants that help bring us together as a community.

Our Pride. Your Joy.



In 2015, the City of Benbrook received or maintained various awards and recognition for exemplary municipal services. These awards highlight Benbrook's commitment to exceed the expectations of our citizens.

CITY AWARDS

PLANNING EXCELLENCE

In 2015, the City of Benbrook, along with 25 other municipalities, received the Certificate of Planning Excellence from the Texas Chapter of American Planning Association. Benbrook has received this recognition every year since 2001, when it was created by the Texas Chapter. This award recognizes cities that demonstrate professional planning standards, increase awareness of professional planning, and aid in economic development and community image.

RECOGNIZED LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

The Benbrook Police Department is a Recognized Law Enforcement Agency by the Texas Police Chiefs Association Law Enforcement Recognition Program. This award indicates the department compares favorably with the very finest in the state, regardless of department size. An agency becomes recognized by meeting or exceeding 163 best practices and voluntarily undergoing an exhaustive review of its operations by an independent assessment team. Benbrook was the 36th law enforcement agency in Texas, and the first in Tarrant County to earn this coveted award.

COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM FOR FLOOD INSURANCE

The City of Benbrook participates in the Community Rating System for the National Flood Insurance Program, which rates communities on their efforts to prevent flooding occurrences and/or damage associated with flooding events. Benbrook received a rating of "6", putting it in the top 24% of cities in the nation for reducing flood hazards.



STORM READY COMMUNITY

The City of Benbrook is recognized as a Storm Ready Community. The National Weather Service presents this recognition to communities that demonstrate severe weather readiness through advanced planning, education, and awareness. Less than one percent of cities in the United States receive this recognition.

GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION AWARD

For the 31st consecutive year, Benbrook received the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) award for Distinguished Budget Presentation for its annual budget. To receive the award, a government unit must publish a budget document that meets criteria as a policy document, an operations guide, a financial plan, and as a communication device. Similarly, Benbrook also received the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.

TEXAS CERTIFIED SCENIC CITY

Benbrook is a Texas Certified Scenic City. The mission of the Scenic City Certification program is to support and recognize Texas municipalities that implement high-quality scenic standards for public roadways and public spaces, with the long-term goal of improving the image of all cities. At the time of recognition, Benbrook was one of 11 cities in Texas to receive Gold/Platinum status.



CITY COUNCIL

Jerry Dittrich, Mayor
Renee Franklin, Place 2
Larry Marshall, Place 3
Rickie Allison, Place 4
Jim Wilson, Place 5
Mark Washburn, Place 6
Ron Sauma, Place 7

CITY HALL

817-249-3000

City Manager
City Secretary
Community Development
Public Services
Budget/Purchasing
Finance
Code Compliance
Marketing/Visitor's Center
Municipal Court

POLICE DEPARTMENT

817-249-2752

(Administration)

817-249-1610

(Dispatch)

FIRE DEPARTMENT

817-249-1727

BENBROOK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

817-249-6990